



**STATEMENT OF PROCEEDINGS FOR THE
REGULAR MEETING OF THE
LOS ANGELES COUNTY COMMISSION FOR
CHILDREN AND FAMILIES
ALTADENA SENIOR CENTER
560 EAST MARIPOSA STREET
ALTADENA, CALIFORNIA 91001
<http://lachildrenscommission.org>**

Monday, February 3, 2014

10:00 AM

AUDIO LINK FOR THE ENTIRE MEETING. (14-0674)

Attachments: [AUDIO](#)

Present: Chair Geneva Berger, Vice Chair Susan F. Friedman, Commissioner Patricia Curry, Commissioner Ann E. Franzen, Commissioner Sydney Kamlager, Commissioner Dr. Sunny Kang, Commissioner Helen Kleinberg, Commissioner Adrienne Konigar-Macklin, Commissioner Adelina Sorkin LCSW/ACSW and Commissioner Martha Trevino-Powell

Excused: Vice Chair Steven M. Olivas Esq., Commissioner Carol O. Biondi, Commissioner Candace Cooper and Commissioner Becky A. Shevlin

Call to Order. (14-0477)

The meeting was called to order at 10:11 a.m.

I. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

1. Introductions of February 3, 2014 Meeting attendees. (14-0478)

Self-introductions were made.

2. Approval of the February 3, 2014 Meeting Agenda. (14-0479)

On motion of Vice Chair Susan Friedman, seconded by Commissioner Sunny Kang (Vice Chair Olivas, Commissioners Biondi, Cooper, and Shevlin being absent), this item was approved. Commissioner Sorkin was not present during the vote taken for this item.

3. Approval of the minutes from the Meeting of January 13, 2014. (Continued from the meeting of January 27, 2014) (14-0420)

On motion of Commissioner Ann E. Franzen, seconded by Commissioner Helen Kleinberg (Vice Chair Olivas, Commissioners Biondi, Cooper, and Shevlin being absent), this item was approved. Commissioner Sorkin was not present during the vote taken for this item.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

4. Approval of the minutes from the Meeting of January 27, 2014. (14-0480)

On motion of Commissioner Helen Kleinberg, seconded by Commissioner Adrienne Konigar-Macklin (Vice Chair Olivas, Commissioners Biondi, Cooper, and Shevlin being absent), this item was approved. Commissioner Sorkin was not present during the vote taken for this item.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

II. REPORTS

5. Chair's report for February 3, 2014 by Geneva Berger, Chair. (14-0481)

Chair Berger reported the following:

- **In observance of Presidents' Day on February 17, 2014, the regularly scheduled Commission meeting will not be held. The next Commission meeting will be held on March 3, 2014.**
- **Bill Gould of First 5 LA has invited Commissioners to attend a Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) session on March 5, 2014. The session will take place in the morning, and has limited spots available. Commissioners who are interested, must inform staff.**

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Vice Chair Olivas, Commissioners Biondi, Cooper, and Shevlin being absent), this item was received and filed.

6. DCFS Director's report for March 3, 2014 by Philip Browning, Director, DCFS. (14-0482)

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Vice Chair Olivas, Commissioners Biondi, Cooper, and Shevlin being absent), this item was continued to the next meeting.

7. Update on the Commission's activities.

- Sylvia Drew Ivie, Commission Executive Liaison (Continued from the meetings of January 27, 2014 and February 3, 2014) (14-0423)

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Vice Chair Olivas, Commissioners Biondi, Cooper, and Shevlin being absent), this item was continued to the next meeting.

III. DISCUSSION

8. Discussion and planning of the Commission's 2014 Agenda schedule. (14-0527)

Chair Berger shared ideas of having a theme for 2014 as a platform for planning the Commission's activities and agendas, and added that the meeting agendas should parallel the Commission's identified objectives. Commissioners were invited to share their ideas and areas of interest in a roundtable discussion:

- **Commissioner Kang proposed two ideas pertaining to scheduling presentations: 1) schedule presentations that guide the Commission through the child welfare processes from the point of initial contact with the Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) to the point of a child/youth exiting the system in order to identify gaps in the system; and 2) schedule one meeting a month devoted to specific issues such as Transition Age Youth (TAY).**
- **Commissioner Konigar-Macklin communicated the need for an identified focus on what the Commission's priorities are, and added that having a better grasp on the child welfare system would help in pinpointing areas that work and those that do not. She also inquired what the Commission's authority is and how best to work with the Departments. She expressed that the organization and structure of DCFS is a priority, and suggested interfacing with different offices to determine problem areas in order for the Commission to become part of the solution.**
- **Commissioner Kamlager agreed with the need for direction in order to map the Commission's objectives, and expressed a need to move past the education phase and towards action and resolution. She was uncertain whether goals are best accomplished through Workgroups, and the priority areas of interest include: 1) TAY; 2) Dual Certification; and 3) DCFS Contracting Process with specific focus on equity, parity and transparency.**

- Commissioner Trevino-Powell concurred with her colleagues on the need for a concentrated focus, and added that determining the best approach to solve the identified issues is important as well as measuring the successes.
- Commissioner Franzen explained that over the years, problems and issues have been identified and discussed during the Commission's meeting presentations; however, as time passes, it is common for presenters to return and present the same issues that had been identified in prior years. Presentations need to focus on what the Departments are currently doing to resolve the issues and have them report their progress periodically.
- Commissioner Sorkin further added that in the past 15 years, the Commission has experienced eight DCFS Directors. Objectives were established, which at times did not come to fruition. The Commission has been vocal in its advocacy and over the years and reached out to different County Departments. The Commission has had an impact in the following areas:
 - The Commission contributed to the establishment of Family Preservation
 - The Commission developed draft guidelines on Visitation
 - Identified ineffective contracted funding for TAY

Priority areas of interest include:

1. Wellness – evaluate whether a child's time in the system is more damaging.
 2. Permanency – additional efforts should be placed on the length of time a child is in out-of-home placement; address issues surrounding relative care placement which may not always be the best option, and in some instances can prevent permanency with guardianship or adoption.
 3. Prevention – data received indicates that 40% of children in the system are under age five with 200 of them being from Service Planning Area 6 (SPA 6) for three years or more. It is important to take a closer look at the reason these young children are remaining in the system.
- Vice Chair Friedman reported that the Blue Ribbon Commission on Child Protection will be releasing their recommendations in April 2014, and suggested refocusing the Commission's efforts.

Top areas of interest include: 1) increasing the number of foster care families; and 2) addressing the inequitable financial support provided to relative caregivers to match support provided to non-relative caregivers.

- Commissioner Curry addressed some concerns of the Commissioners, and explained that the Commission has accomplished a great deal over the years, some of which may not always be apparent. Commissioners may feel that the Commission is not making progress; however, that is not the case. Much of the Commission's work and accomplishments are achieved by building a relationship and working directly with the Board of Supervisors (Board) and their District Deputies (Deputies). The difficulty in picking a theme and limiting the focus to one or two issues is that there are several layers in the child welfare system, with all issues connecting to one another. It has worked best to take one step at a time and have a strategy when working on an issue. An area of interest is prevention. In the Commission's presentation to the Children and Families Well-Being Cluster, emphasis was placed on the need to prevent at-risk children and families from entering the child welfare system. Commissioner Curry distributed a document entitled "Breaking the Cycle" as a proposed overarching theme with the following subareas:
 - Prevention for at-risk children and families having no contact with DCFS in an effort to keep them out of the system;
 - Permanence, providing children and families the services needed for reunification, adoption, or guardianship and well-being; and
 - Differential Response focused on children and families that have had contact with DCFS however are not under DCFS jurisdiction.
- Commissioner Kleinberg also remarked that the Commission has had an impact and raised issues to various Departments in provoking thoughts on how different areas of the child welfare system affect children and families. Commissioner Kleinberg also agreed with the suggestion of the Commission focusing efforts on prevention; however, Commissioners should continue to work on activities they are currently participants on. In terms of setting agenda items, reports from the Executive Liaison should be a regular item and the DCFS Director should be asked to provide reports on specific areas. Additionally, more DCFS data should be requested.

Commissioner Sorkin added that the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA) Plan is scheduled to be released in March 2014. The Commission needs to be proactive in advocating for the allocation of prevention funds in identified priority areas for children and TAY.

- **Chair Berger explained that the Commission's authority is to make recommendations to the Board. The Commission's power is in the influence or impact the Commissioners may have with the departments and those involved in the child welfare system. The Commission should focus efforts on issues that have the capability of being attained. The Commission's recommendations to the Board are best received when funding, implementation, outcomes and support from various departments have been considered and included the recommendation. An immediate issue that can be addressed is the issue of child sex trafficking.**

Discussion ensued on scheduling a special meeting to discuss and approve sending a letter to the Board urging support of MHSA funding for mental health services for victims of child sex trafficking. The timing of the letter is critical with the Systems Leadership Team (SLT) currently considering components for the 2015-2018 MHSA Plan.

Commissioner Kleinberg proposed the Commission to adopt the "Breaking the Cycle" theme distributed by Commissioner Curry.

By Common Consent, there being no objection (Vice Chair Olivas, Commissioners Biondi, Cooper, and Shevlin being absent), this item was received and filed.

Attachments: [SUPPORTING DOCUMENT](#)

IV. MISCELLANEOUS

Matters Not Posted

9. **Matters not posted on the agenda, to be discussed and (if requested) placed on the agenda for action at a future meeting of the Commission, or matters requiring immediate action because of an emergency situation or where the need to take action arose subsequent to the posting of the agenda. (14-0485)**

There were none.

Announcements

10. **Announcements for the meeting of February 3, 2014. (14-0486)**

There were none.

Public Comment

11. Opportunity for members of the public to address the Commission on items of interest that are within the jurisdiction of the Commission. (14-0488)

No members of the public addressed the Commission.

Adjournment

12. Adjournment of the meeting of February 3, 2014. (14-0489)

The meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.